Lecture by Prof. George Huxley
Tuesday 24th January 2012

You and your guest(s) are cordially invited to a lecture on Tuesday 24 January 2012 at 6 pm in Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1. The lecture will be held in Room G22/26 on the Ground Floor of the South Block of Senate House. This is through the kindness of Prof. Michael Edwards, the Director of the Institute of Classical Studies. The chair will be taken by Dr Nicholas Richardson.

Aristotle and the Oligarchs: the plight of contemplative scholarship in market-driven universities

The question is asked with the help of Aristotle: “How is the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake to thrive in a polity dominated by markets?” Damage to higher education from excessive emphasis upon a narrowly defined usefulness threatens the essential character of universities. The merits of contemplative science and scholarship, Aristotelian theoria, are praised, and the notions, moral and political, of philia and koinōnia are shown still to be necessary for the serene functioning of a constitution. The philosopher’s connection of oligarchy with riches, it is argued, is pertinent to the understanding of tensions, social and constitutional, in contemporary Britain.

Professor G.L. Huxley is a Greek scholar of great distinction. Much of his life has been devoted to learning in Ireland where for many years (1962-1983) he was Professor of Greek in the Queen’s University Belfast. He has had an enduring connection with Trinity College Dublin (of which he was made Honorary Professor in 1989) and, as an office-holder, with the Royal Irish Academy. He is also an Honorary President of the Classical Association of Ireland and a Patron of the Irish Institute of Hellenic Studies at Athens. However, his association with the British School at Athens goes back even further. In 1952 and 1953 he assisted in Professor Alan Wace’s excavations at Mycenae. In 1955 he worked with Sinclair Hood at Knossos. During his years as Assistant Director of the School, 1956-1958 (simultaneously with an All Souls Fellowship) Prof. Huxley worked again at Knossos, with Nicolas Platon (Sellopoulo). In 1963-1965, with Prof. J.N. Coldstream, he excavated at Kastri on Kythera, identifying a Minoan colony. From 1986 to 1989 he was Director of the Gennadius Library in the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. He was recently appointed to adjunct Professorships in Mathematics and in Ancient Classics at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. He is a Member of Academia Europaea.

Among Prof. Huxley’s writings are Achaeans and Hittites (1960), Early Sparta (1962), The Early Ionians (1966), (with J.N. Coldstream, Eds.) Kythera (1972), On Aristotle and Greek Society (1979), and Homer and the Travellers (1988). His hobby is siderodromophilia.

Following the lecture, there will be an informal reception in the same room. There is a suggested donation of £8.50 for the lecture (£10.50 for anyone not a member of the Friends of the BSA). Donations for the lecture should be made in advance as monies may not be collected on the door. The donations are intended to cover costs and produce a small surplus for Friends' funds. Please let me know at the above address if you wish to attend. Cheques should be made payable to “The Friends of the British School at Athens”, THERE ARE NO TICKETS - applications will only be acknowledged on request.

Marie-Christine Keith.